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The Director  
Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D. C. 20505

US REGISTRY  
FILE Security 18

10 January 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Principals, National Foreign Intelligence Board

SUBJECT : APEX Steering Group

1. On 7 January 1980 the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs issued Presidential Directive/NSC-55 stating that the President has approved the establishment of a single special access system to be called APEX for the purpose of protecting compartmented intelligence. The Directive instructs me to serve as the Executive Agent for the National Security Council in establishing and operating APEX. ☐

2. I herewith establish two implementing mechanisms. An APEX Steering Group is created to energize, monitor, and staff the various activities encompassed by APEX. The group will be composed of representatives of the Community organizations currently having responsibilities pertaining to compartmented intelligence. I am also establishing a position of Special Assistant to the DCI for Compartmentation (SA/DCI/C) who will chair the APEX Steering Group; he will be supported by a small APEX Control Staff. ☐

3. The establishment of APEX is a major undertaking and will be modular and deliberate. I expect that the administration of APEX policy, guidelines, and procedures will be carried out by relevant DCI Committees in concert with the Steering Group. This staff shall have representatives from several members of the Community; they will be assigned to CIA on a rotational, nonrenewable, reimbursable basis. No tenure, consequently, will accrue ☐

4. I wish to take this opportunity to commend and thank all of the people who have labored so hard in the effort which has culminated in the Presidential decision to establish APEX. In particular, I wish to thank the members of the NFIB Working Group on Compartmentation, the members of the various subpanels, and all of the people who supported the collective efforts. I recognize that the Community has not viewed the APEX proposal uniformly. The President has decided, however, to establish this system and even more cooperation will be required over the future months. ☐

Declassify when PD/NSC 55,  
7 January 1980, is declassified.

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5. I appoint Mr. Harry C. Eisenbeiss as the Special Assistant to the DCI for Compartmentation effective 14 January 1980. Mr.  will serve as his deputy.



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